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SUBJECT: THE AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE: WHERE WE ARE, WHERE
WE'RE GOING

REF: A) NOVEMBER 2006 DOS-DOD OIG POLICE TRAINING AND
READINESS ASSESSMENT B) KABUL 115 C) 06
KABUL 5566 D) KABUL 1049 E) KABUL 435

¶1. Summary: This cable uses the opportunity offered by
a tasking from the Joint Department of State -
Department of Defense Inspector General Interagency
Assessment of Afghanistan Police Training and
Readiness (ref A) to review recent progress in Afghan
police development and to describe ongoing programs.
It will also sketch out a way forward over the next
twelve months and also look at several long-term
issues. Most important is the critical need for the
U.S. and international community to remain engaged
over the long term, both financially and in developing
the human capital required not only to achieve
progress in the police sector but also in areas of
rule of law and governance. End summary.

Background

¶2. The Afghan National Police (ANP) has made
significant strides since tribal leaders and warlords
filled the security vacuum in the wake of the
Taliban's defeat five years ago. It will take at
least several more years, however, before the ANP
develops the capacity to serve as an effective
security partner and is able to adequately enforce the
rule of law and order in provinces and districts
throughout Afghanistan. The urgent need to deploy
forces capable of responding to emerging security
threats competes with longer term institutional goals
of establishing a civilian police force focused on
community law enforcement and maintaining a sharp
distinction between police and military roles.
Moreover, weaknesses within the Ministry of Interior
(MOI) and ANP have seriously impeded police
effectiveness. These include corrupt and/or
incompetent leadership, limited control over
provincial police structures, low institutional

capacity at all levels, lack of coordination among and between donor countries and the Government of Afghanistan. Endemic corruption and the negative externalities of the drug trade exacerbate these challenges.

13. Until 2005, U.S. activity in the security sector was focused on training the Afghan National Army. Germany, the lead nation for police under the Bonn Agreement, concentrated its efforts on building long-term institutional capacity, particularly through funding and providing personnel support for the Kabul Police Academy, a long-term training facility for police officers. The U.S. set up a Central Training Center and seven Regional Training Centers to provide basic and in-service training to police personnel of all ranks. Additionally, MOI reform was initiated, and the mentoring program began at the general officer level. The focus on long-term development came with near term costs, however. In particular, beginning in summer 2006 the deteriorating security situation in the south, southeast, and selected other areas around the country demanded immediate attention.

14. The USG in mid-2005 decided to significantly increase its involvement in police training and equipping. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Department of State and the Department of Defense whereby DoD was tasked to direct, with policy guidance from the Chief of Mission, all USG efforts to organize, train, and equip Afghan security forces. DOS retained oversight authority and responsibility for the Embassy Kabul comprehensive police plan. This

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was accompanied by an influx of funding, although some of the effects, particularly in the distribution of weapons and ammunition, were not felt for almost 12 months. In early 2006 the USG, through the Combined Security Assistance Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) began implementation of a "systems approach" to reforming the Ministry of Interior. Together with pay and rank reform and other programmatic elements, including closer cooperation among donor countries, there has been some progress toward addressing the challenges faced by the MOI and ANP. The next twelve months will see further movement in a positive direction, provided that these activities receive sufficient financial and political support from all donor nations, and that Afghan senior leadership remains committed to the difficult effort to reform the MOI and ANP.

2006 Programs

15. 2006 saw substantial progress in several key areas, as discussed in the DOS/DOD Inspector General's report:

- Rank reform. The first two stages of a proposed four-stage process of rank reform have been completed. The number of generals, which was exceedingly top heavy, has been reduced to an appropriate level for a 62,000-person police force. Specifically, 120 two- and three-star generals and 235 brigadier generals have been reduced to 31 and 86 respectively. The rank reform process consisted of a written exam and weighted application followed by international vetting by the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) to determine if the candidate possessed any human rights violations, evidence of previous corruption or administrative malfeasance. While the Selection Board was an internal MOI body, the German Police Program Office (GPPO), CTSC-A, and UNAMA provided technical advisors and assisted in administering the process. In general the Selection

Board was able to remove several of the most incompetent police generals. There were irregularities in the process, some of which were addressed through a four-month probation review of fourteen police officers. This resulted in 10 officers being fired, 2 confirmed in place, one transferred, and one removed from consideration due to illness. Concerns remain that many of those who were appointed to senior positions through the Selection Board may have been chosen on the basis of political or personal connections. In some cases it also appears that officers with strong paper credentials were not well-suited to the demands of the job. Many of these were changed out in a subsequent action taken by President Karzai in mid-January 2007 (ref B). While there remain substantial weaknesses in MOI and ANP leadership, rank reform has been a positive step toward the professionalization of the police force.

-Pay distribution: Corruption has had a major impact on the salary distribution process. Until recently, the MOI used a cadre of "trusted agents" to distribute salaries to police in the provincial centers and outlying districts. At each step opportunities existed for police chiefs and other officials to take a cut, resulting in the patrolmen only receiving a fraction of what they were due. The use of unverified police lists also led to the creation of "ghost patrolmen," in which police chiefs inflated their personnel rosters in order to obtain larger illegal payments. Recent actions to institute a three-phase program with the overall intent of paying policemen by direct deposit to their individual bank accounts have

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made enormous strides toward alleviating many of these abuses (Ref C). Problems remain in regularly and routinely providing pay to outlying districts and cutting out remaining chokepoints for corruption. The PRT Officers and US Embassy led assessment team continue to uncover instances in which patrolmen are not paid on time, and this issue will require constant vigilance

- Regional Commands and the Role of Governors: In late spring 2006, the Ministry of Interior created police commands at the regional level. The action was designed to address two issues: the lack of coordination between ANA and ANP, and the power held by many governors over provincial police forces which often led to misallocation of resources, favoritism, and corruption. At the same time this action was designed to extend the authority of the MoI into the provinces and also improve command and control. The police regional commands are in the same provincial centers as the ANA Corps Commands, and are led by a two-star general (the same rank as the ANA leadership). They were originally located inside the Regional Training Centers but other facilities have since been found or built for them. The change has in general empowered the police leadership and made it more responsive through the MOI chain of command, although not all attendant issues have been resolved. The ANP regional commands are severely undermanned and have limited fiscal resources at their disposal. Article 4 of the Afghan Constitution provides provincial governors with vaguely defined powers over ANP units. While this Article has been reinterpreted by the Minister of Interior and Attorney General in an attempt to empower the regional commanders by specifying that the governors have only an advisory role over police forces, many governors continue to have de facto command and control over the units in their provinces.

- Equipment distribution: Due to bureaucratic delays

in Washington and the long timeline for equipment deliveries, many patrolmen in 2006 still did not have sufficient weapons, ammunition, vehicles, or other appropriate equipment to face the threat. That bottleneck has been alleviated somewhat and weapons are flowing to police units. However the standing up of new forces and reprioritizing of units such as the border police mean that fully equipping the ANP is likely to take at least 18 more months.

- Rebalancing: In response to a perceived security threat in spring-summer 2006, the MOI, in close coordination with CSTC-A and with the agreement of the German Police Program, attempted to implement a revision of the ANP fielding plan that would temporarily increase the number of patrolmen in certain key districts by a total of 2,100, move standby police units to the south, and stand down the highway police with the intention of reintegrating these individuals into other ANP units. Rebalancing proved to be difficult on several fronts and achieved only limited success. The highway police have only recently been disbanded, the number of patrolmen willing to leave their current posts and move to the south was far less than expected, and most of the standby police units performed poorly due to inadequate leadership and insufficient quantities of equipment. The recruiting effort authorized by rebalancing eventually led to the development of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police concept (see below).

Ongoing Programs

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16. Several ANP programs are ongoing which should lead to short- and long-term improvements in the force.

- Systems approach to MOI reform: CSTC-A has embedded over 65 mentors throughout the Ministry of Interior to assist the ministry in building capacity. This approach to MOI reform encompasses fifteen separate systems -- examples include personnel management, training and logistics. Each system includes a "capabilities milestones" approach to assessing MOI capacity. Thus, rather than focusing on the individual, progress is sought by mentoring the entire system. In most categories the MOI is still in the early stages of being able to operate independently. The goal is for all systems to be fully independent by December 2008, although in some categories significant challenges remain to reaching that goal on time.

- Rank reform: Rank reform continues with the selection and deployment of field grade officers (colonels, lieutenant colonels, and majors) in the near-term and testing of company grade officers (captains and lieutenants). The company grade officers will be selected and reassigned later in summer 2007. As rank reform proceeds further into the ranks, it is expected that the police force will gradually become more professionalized and less tainted by corruption. This result will not be achieved overnight, particularly since many poorly qualified police leaders still have strong political connections to national and provincial decision makers. Over the long term, however, rank reform should show significant results.

- ANA/ANP pay parity: As of spring 2007, an initiative under review by the Government of Afghanistan and the international police community is to achieve salary parity between the ANP and Afghan National Army. Although pay and rank reform increases the amount received by patrolmen from USD 16/month to

USD 70/month and pay distribution improvements mean they are more likely to receive the whole sum, this is still not a competitive wage. ANA soldiers earn USD 100/month for duty that is in many ways less hazardous than that of police officers, while private security companies pay substantially more than the ANP. The Law and Order Trust Fund Afghanistan will review the pay situation at its next quarterly Steering Committee meeting and is likely to recommend pay parity with the ANA.

- Increasing the size of the ANP: A second proposal still under review would, if adopted, increase the size of the ANP from a force of 62,000 as agreed in the Afghanistan Compact to 82,000. Through the mechanism of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), a broadly representative working group, including members of the international community and both Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance, has met to review the issue. A decision is expected at JCMB V, in early May 2007. Significant concerns about the long-term budget sustainability of a force of this size make this a decision that will have to be taken at the highest levels of the Afghan government, based on the JCMB recommendation. The GOA will not be able to finance this increase, placing the onus for support on the international community for what will likely be a very long-term commitment. However the U.S. position has been that immediate security needs are paramount and without this larger force - with concomitant improved training and equipment - the ANP will not be able to face difficult challenges particularly in isolated areas and along the borders.

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- Auxiliary Police: The Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) program was developed in fall 2006 in response to an urgent security need in the south and east that the rebalancing plan failed to address successfully. The ANAP has been the focus of intense effort within the Afghan and international policy community, particularly through the mechanisms of the Policy Action Group (PAG) and Security Operations Group (SOG). There has been a particular concern to make sure that ANAP patrolmen, who receive only very limited training (two weeks initially plus three weeks of follow-up sustainment training) are properly recruited and vetted to prevent them from turning into reconstituted militia forces. Post has been very involved in attempting to ensure that these standards are met, both by participating in policy-level discussions and also by sending teams out to the provinces to inspect ANAP recruitment and training. See ref D for recent updates in this program and remaining problems in implementation.

- ANCOP: Another new program designed to extend and enforce the rule of law throughout the entire country of Afghanistan, as well as to counter instability in both the cities and remote areas is the Afghan National Civil Order Police. The program, which will eventually number 5,000 relatively highly-trained, well equipped patrolmen in a kind of quick-reaction force (replacing the present "standby police," who have proved ineffective) will deploy either to urban areas as riot police or to rural areas to counter threats from insurgency or other instability. While this is an important program for building Afghan government capacity to deal with security threats, it will take some time to be fully operational. The first classes for this program are now training at the Regional Training Centers in Herat and Mazar-e Sharif. See ref E for further information on ANCOP.

- ANA/ANP Coordination: Since 2005, the number of

"green on green" clashes between ANA and ANP has sharply diminished, though they still occasionally occur. In order to facilitate coordination, CSTC-A has assisted the Ministries of Defense and Interior in establishing Joint Regional and Provincial Coordination Centers (JRCC) and (JPCC), at which ANA, ANP, and National Directorate of Security officers work together. In Kabul, there are ANP liaison officers at the National Military Command Center, and ANA liaison officers at the National Police Command Center. While the culture of distrust between the two services remains, and JPCCs are not adequately manned or effective in all provinces, this is a first step toward coordination between the various elements in the Afghan National Security Forces.

The Way Ahead

¶7. The programs mentioned above are an indication of the range of activity occurring in the police sector in Afghanistan. Despite the many challenges that remain, there have been significant positive improvements in both the training and equipping of individual policemen and reforming the leadership and institutions in the Ministry of Interior. However, much remains to be done. Several specialty units within the police, such as the border police, ANCP, and ANAP have to be fully trained and professionalized. In the case of ANAP, the program is of a short duration and it is expected that some patrolmen will enter into the regular police at the end of their contract. (Note: ANAP contracts are for

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one year, although the MOI can extend the program for a second year if required by the security situation. It is hoped that most ANAP who have proved competent on the job will choose to join a regular police unit.)

¶8. A significant increase in mentoring coverage at the district and company level will be essential to improving the quality of the police. At present, police go through training at the regional training centers or elsewhere, but there is no follow-on supervision in the districts or companies. As a result they are regularly unable to sustain their trained level of performance and have difficulty maintaining professional standards of conduct. CSTC-A has a plan to increase mentoring coverage at the district and company level, depending on the availability of both civilian and military resources. The ESDP mission supported by the EU, which is expected to start in mid-June 2007, will concentrate on improving quality at the Ministry, regional and provincial levels, and in specialized services such as the Criminal Investigation Unit and liaison with the justice sector. The number of civilian police in the ESDP mission is not expected to directly allow mentor coverage in the districts, but could allow for remissioning of US assets to provide this service. Also by mid-summer it is expected that the International Police Coordination Board will be fully functional. The purpose of this body is to develop a joint approach for all the police training in country in close coordination with CSTC-A. It will also increase Afghan ownership of the process by giving the MOI a more prominent coordinating role.

Comment

¶9. The programs described above, and the new initiatives planned for this year, are expensive financially and require significant commitment in

human capital. The requested Security Supplemental funding is designed to cover many of the equipment and infrastructure needs of the police over the next several years. The problem of police salaries remains unresolved. Salaries are paid by international contributions to LOTFA, to which the U.S. and EU have historically been the largest donors. If, as expected, the size of the police increases by one-third, to 82,000, and the pay for patrolmen increases by 40 percent, from USD 70 to USD 100, the cost of ANP salaries and associated expenses is likely to reach USD 200 million a year. The Government of Afghanistan does not, and will not in the near future, have the resources to cover this bill, which must be paid by the international community. Over the longer term, the GOA's commitment to international financial institutions, particularly the IMF, requires that it take on an ever-larger share of this expense. Ministry of Finance officials are deeply concerned that the cost of the security sector will impact other programs, particularly in the social sector, that are vital to Afghanistan's future. The U.S. and other donors must therefore recognize that their financial support will continue to be required in order to safeguard the security of Afghanistan.

¶10. Secondly, it must be recognized that developing the police sector cannot occur in isolation. In particular, until the justice sector is able to take on the responsibility of prosecuting, judging, and imprisoning malefactors, the culture of impunity that gives rise to corruption and warlordism will not be controlled. The ESDP program's intent to link police

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and justice sector reform will be an important step. However, the overall improvement in the law and order situation will depend on progress in both arenas.

¶11. Finally, police leadership is only one aspect of a larger governance issue that requires long-term support for institutions and in particular the development of human capital. It has been estimated that 70 percent of police patrolmen are illiterate. Officers are of varying quality, but in general there are few competent, professional officers to meet the desperate need. The police academy will gradually alleviate this situation, but Afghanistan will require a generation to build a literate, capable police force. Our commitment must also be generational. This is a slow, arduous, task. Fully supporting the effort both fiscally and with the appropriate levels of manpower is the only way to build an Afghanistan that is stable, secure, and able to counter the challenges of extremism, corruption, and rampant criminality -- an Afghanistan in which ordinary people can live safely under the rule of law.

WOOD